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Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 August 2018]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.

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The use of Media platforms as acts of intimidation on the civil society for cooperating with the UN bodies

Preface

Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights is an Egyptian Non-governmental Organization in consultative status with the UN ECOSOC since April 2016.
on March 2018; Maat was subjected to a fierce campaign of intimidation and threat through the spread of false rumours against the organization to obstruct its activities and deter its participation in the UN events which serves the global Human Rights issues. This campaign included the use of the United Nations title in a manner that substituted a pure fraud. There are a number of indicators and evidences that are indicated in this report which proves the direct involvement and support of Qatar State to the campaign of intimidation and threat through the spread of false rumours targeting Maat association.
Maat delivers this intervention, so as not to be treated as a single case, but to draw attention to an important side forming the challenges that the civil society faces on dealing with the UN bodies and show the imminent need to take it into account and to find rooted solutions for it.

Maat's participation to the 37th session of the Human Rights Council

In the 26th of February 2018; Maat association together with a number of other NGOs from several countries launched the establishment of an international alliance titled: "The International Alliance for Peace and Development". The launch of the alliance took place on the side-lines of the 37th session of the HRC in Geneva. The activities of the launching of the alliance included the following:

1- Organizing a peaceful stand in front of the United Nations headquarter raising only one slogan written in UN six languages - "Unite for Peace"- the stand did not target a specific country by any mean but it was communicating all countries of the world without any exceptions.
2- Handling establishment meetings to ally outside the UN headquarters. The meetings were held at rooms of the "Club Suisse de la presse" or that of other associations. Such meetings were limited to the procedural framework discussions and the submission of the alliance's launching statement.

Maat for peace, development and human rights also organized two side events parallel to the 37th session of the Human Rights Council, none of which included a reference to any country in the region or the world. On a general basis; the events did not communicate any criticism or negatives. The topics of the event were:

- The Human rights approach to the African Sustainable Development- Agenda 2036
- The role of the civil society organizations in promoting peace and sustainable development.

The details of the attack on Maat and the campaign of intimidation and threat

A fierce campaign of moral defamation against Maat started once the association has announced for the launch of an International alliance for Peace and Development as well as organizing the peaceful stand outside the UN headquarters and handling of side events inside it. The details and procedures of the campaign included the following:

- On the 27th of February 2018; the CSO branch of the OHCHR received an email from an unknown association calls itself "UN Watch". It requested the cancelation of all Maat's side events in the UN headquarters. The email also included false information about Maat. It was clear that the email targeted the indication of the United Nations so as to be used on media as if the UN and one of its offices were attacking Maat. This constitutes a crime of fraud and deceit.
  With regard to this false and imaginary organization; by searching we found that it does not exist on the real ground in any of the headquarters they allege to have. The organization does not publish any information about its members by which it contradicts the well-known rules of transparency. It's worth mentioning that the email was signed by a person claiming to be a money laundering lawyer in a company named "Akin Gump Strastium", and through further research we found that this name is fake and the real name is for a one and only company named: "Akin Gump Strauss" which is a well- known company. Thus, the email and the signature were made to deceive the UN that the organization is real and legal by changing the last letters of the company's name for the reader to be confused.
- Another organization named "Euroscope" - (There are evidences proving its direct relation with the Qatari authority and its politicalizing methodology)-, has also published a statement accusing Maat for being funded by the United Arab Emirates and that it reached Geneva only to attack Qatar.
- In what it appeared to be a coordination of roles among those delusory organizations and the Media belonging to Qatar , after a few hours passed ,a fierce media campaign was launched depending on the

sent email by such delusory organization named "UN Watch" besides the deceiving statement published by the unprofessional organization named "Euroscope". A number of Qatari newspapers in Qatar state and which are affiliated with its ruling authority and its security agencies published the email noting that the email was sent by a UN organization which is not true. The following was the most prominent press issues published:

1- **"UAE hires mercenaries to defend its black record"** published on **3/3/2018** by **"Al Arab Qatar".**
Link to article: https://goo.gl/4Vb8Hk

2- **"Delusory organizations & fake stands.. New disgrace to Maat in Geneva"** published on **3/3/2018** by **"The Lens Post".**
Link to article: https://goo.gl/vgbMEm

3- **"Put an open account at his disposal .. "Arabs Devil" is using an Egyptian mercenary to improve the image of the Emirates abroad!"** published on **3/3/2018** by **"Al Watan Qatar".**
Link to article: https://goo.gl/USWDVJ

4- **"To obstruct the work of «human rights» and attack Qatar .. UN: Abu Dhabi formed an alliance in Geneva to gar le its violations to human rights"** published on **5/3/2018** by **"Al Arab Qatar".**
Link to article: https://goo.gl/rQScEm

Indications that the Qatari authorities are connected to the attack on Maat and the attempt to intimidate and threat the association

Euroscope

Following the website and the proclaimed stances of the organization; it was clear that its methodology is completely politicalized and purely directed against the countries to which Qatar has political concerns with specially; the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. You can check the official website of the Euroscope to make sure that none of the published topics constituted a single criticism to Qatar and on the other side the material that constitutes a criticism and attack to UAE, Egypt and Saudi Arabia reaches more than 95% from the overall published materials. This confirms beyond any doubt that the organization is affiliated to the state of Qatar and receives its mandate from the ruling authority and its security agencies http://euroscopeme.com/

"UN Watch" organization

Following the official website of the organization and its electronic publications; we found that it focuses only on criticizing the countries and Human Rights figures targeted by the Qatari media and agencies, it also allocates a vast ground space to attack on UAE specifically and alike the "Eurosocpe", it does not approach or criticize any issue related to the Qatari authority. It uses a clear politicalized language and totally away of objectivity, transparency and professionalism of the Human Rights practice. There are evidences proving that the organization has no materialistic existence and most probably ruled by figures belonging to the Qatari authority in order to create a media platform for the purpose of propaganda, spread rumours, intimidation and threat which is same to what happened with Maat.
http://www.iunwatch.org/press-release/

The spread of rumours and adoption of intimidation campaign by the Qatari Media

In the light of the previous review of the press releases that were published, you will find that there are media platforms inside Qatar that have adopted the attack on Maat and echoed the untrustworthy lies, as well as many media known to be funded by Qatar and that it is just a part of the Qatari authority, We will mention only the list of official Qatari newspapers and websites that published rumors and adopted the campaign of intimidation against Maat, namely the following:

1- Al Arab Qatar
2- Al Watan Qatar
3- The lens post website

The recommendations and requested procedures

1- Maat association requests the Human Rights Council for taking the necessary procedure that promote protection and safety of human rights activists and defenders by highlighting the issue of "Rumors Usage" and the adoption of resources and inputs from delusory organization for the purpose of intimidation and threat of active participants to UN events.
2- Maat association calls for a transparent investigation into the relation of organizations as "Euroscope" and "UN Watch" with the Qatari authority.
3- Maat association demands that the Qatari press and media which adopted the campaign of attack on Maat to submit an official apology pursuant to the codes of conduct of press and media honor.